

3rd Annual 'Construction Career Days' Provides Students with Real Life Experiences



Over 2,000 students, including those from KY Tech's C.E. McCormick ATC and J. D. Patton ATC, recently participated in the 3rd Annual Construction Career Days. The event included hands-on activities, heavy construction equipment, and booth exhibits.

"I first learned about this activity from my advisory committee members," says David Lawson, carpentry instructor at C.E. McCormick ATC. "The

Photo at left: Welding Student Kris Griffith, a senior at J.D. Patton says, "I like it because you can see all aspects of what we can get out of technical school. And, it shows us about the career instead of just telling us."

"It's an opportunity for students to connect with coordinators of the various unions and trades. They are being recruited to be in these careers," says J.D. Patton ATC Welding Instructor Steve Rottman. "They are also being told that they need to stay in school and learn their technologies before they get into apprenticeship."

Construction Career Days event is beneficial to the students because they get to see the diverse jobs and careers that are available in the construction field. The event also reinforces what we teach in the classroom about safety (wearing eye protection, hardhats, and safety harnesses) and the need for qualified and skilled trades people in all aspects of the industry. The students can also talk to college representatives and potential employers about post-secondary opportunities and apprenticeship programs.”

Construction Career Days Event Organizer Tonya Beesley of Baker Concrete Construction says, “Baker Concrete realizes there is a shortage in the industry and that we need to generate more interest in these careers. We are trying to show the

students the many career opportunities and that there is a lot of money to be made in the construction industry. It’s a lot of work, but I’ve heard many positive comments from our exhibitors.”

Construction Career Days was created to expose high school students and adults to rewarding and diverse careers in the industry. It was designed to educate the youth about a friendlier and more professional industry that cares about them and their future.

Construction Career Days are strongly based on partnerships of volunteers working together for youth, industry and community. The partnerships also work towards enhancing career technology education and developing curriculum that better prepares the students for careers in the industry.



“I thought it was a great experience for the students in learning what is out there in construction careers– as well as learning about some of the little things - like directions to a job site and how to dress for the weather. Not every day is going to be 72 degrees and sunny, so this was also helpful in providing an opportunity for kids to learn how to plan ahead.”

**Welding Instructor Charles “Augie” Germann
C.E. McCormick ATC**

Josh Bengel, a C.E. McCormick masonry student, shows Pat Eddings of the Jess Hauser Masonry Co. his masonry skills.

“I love it. It’s great,” says Eddings. “This fair gives the kids a chance to see what’s in store for them. It’s hands-on instead of just looking at a book.”

“I really like this,” says Josh. “You can learn about other jobs and can find something that you are interested in because there is so much here to see.”





J.D. Patton SkillsUSA President and Electricity Student Chase Autry sits behind the wheel of a Humvee.

“I’m enjoying this because we can experience different fields and learn about a lot of great apprenticeship programs. I’ve had an opportunity to meet with many different employers.”

Tyler Mathews, an electrical technology student and SkillsUSA math team member at J.D. Patton was delighted when he talked with Steve Denier regarding a co-op possibility.

“This has been a good opportunity for finding out about co-op and learning about their programs,” says Tyler. “I’ve already found a co-op possibility with Denier Electric Co., Inc.

“The value of this career fair is getting the kids involved in the trade and excited about it at the same time. If I don’t spend time with the kids, they won’t know what the opportunities are,” says Denier. “Whether it’s working for me or somebody else, my goal is to get kids in the electrical field.”



L to r – Mathews, Instructor Tom Pitts and Steven Denier discuss co-op opportunities.



C.E. McCormick Electrical Technology Student Jonathan Reis operates a backhoe.

“It’s a lot of fun. You don’t get this opportunity every day to drive this type of equipment,” says Reis.



Josh Helton, a C.E. McCormick drafting/CAD student, participates in a “fall protection” demonstration. Jeff Whitaker, of DBI – SALA, an equipment manufacturing and fall protection training company, shows Helton the correct way to position his body so if he takes a fall, he won’t hurt himself.

“I like being here because we get a look at what jobs are available and how much money we can make,” says Josh.



United Rentals Branch Manager Stephen Cacciatore, helps C.E. McCormick Drafting Student Kayla Garcia learn about a trowel machine that is used for finishing concrete.

“Participating in this career fair is going to help me for college,” says Kayla. “I’ve learned a lot about the money you can earn in the different careers.”

Justin Thorpe, a C.E. McCormick welding student gets instruction from Matthew Gamble, Great Oaks Institute of Technology student and former displaced worker.

“I can get an idea of what’s out there in the real world,” says Thorpe. “It’s giving me a head start. I’m learning what kind of money there is to be made in the different fields.”

“This is a life learning activity. Once you get it, you have it and no one can take it away,” says Gamble. “You can take these skills and fall back on them for a job. It can also become a part time job.”



Chris Kidd, a J.D. Patton HVAC student, meets with a representative from Perfection Mechanical Services.

“I think this is important because you can learn what types of job opportunities are available and how much you can make,” says Kidd.

J.D. Patton HVAC Instructor John

Christiansen says, “I believe the students receive great information from employers at an event like this. They get an idea of what’s out there.”



Operating a John Deere Backhoe is C.E. McCormick Drafting Student Tammy Trimbur while United Rentals Assistant Manager Ryan Lindsey provides instruction.

“It was fun and I liked having that big piece of equipment in my control,” says Tammy. “This career fair is of value because it will help us in college. We can try to find companies where we can co-op.”



Ernst Pumping Concrete Pump Operator Bill Stanaway (pointing) shows J.D. Patton VICA Parliamentarian and Electricity Student Chase Eubank the correct procedure to operate the concrete pump.

“There’s more than just nails and wood in building a house or structure,” says Stanaway. “Our operation shows how the concrete gets placed. If you can’t get a truck in a location, people call us. I can go four stories up or down and we have more reach.”

“I think this is a great place to be and we have learned a lot about companies and what they pay,” says Eubank. “I’m going to think about the various careers and what I might be able to do in the future. And, I’m definitely taking home a hard hat!”

“This is worthwhile because we are learning about the many opportunities in the construction industry,” says Daniel Johnson, a J.D. Patton electrical technology student trying his hand at operating a Komatsu 138 Track Hoe. He is receiving instruction from Travis Roberts who works in human resources at John R. Jurgensen, a highway construction company.

“ Basically this event exposes students to the construction industry. We have to get people more involved in it,” says Roberts. “We come out every year to get people interested in our industry. We need people who can run this equipment.”





“I’m impressed with the level of commitment from all the exhibitors in putting on this career fair. It’s definitely an eye-opening experience for many of these students because it puts the career, associated equipment and starting salary up front and personal,” says OCTE Deputy Executive Director Lewis Carter. “It would be a great event to hold in Kentucky where we could provide this same type of opportunity for so many of our Kentucky Tech students.”

At right, Felicia Hill (center), a senior electrical technology student at J.D.Patton says, “I think it’s a good opportunity for women to join forces with men to show them what we are made of. I think I’m going into the electrical field when I graduate.”

“I love this. I think this is one of the best activities to promote the construction industry. If you can’t recruit them, we can’t educate them,” says Juva Barber of the Home Builders Association of Kentucky (far right in the Messer Scissor Lift).



At right: Chad Sandfoss, a J.D. Patton senior carpentry student operating a front-end track loader says, “It’s great hands-on interaction with students and actual industry personnel.”

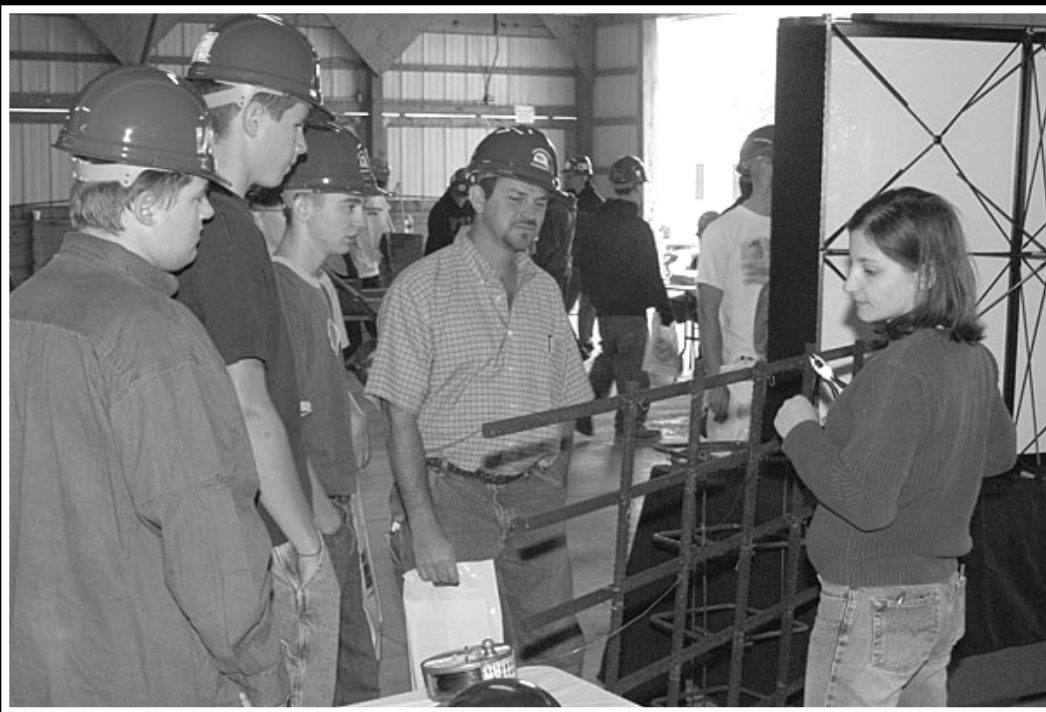
“I just love to have my students exposed to as many phases of this industry as possible,” says J.D. Patton Carpentry Instructor John Staubach. “They have to make decisions on their careers and this provides a great opportunity for them to experience what’s available.”



“I feel the construction fair gives students a chance to see all the careers available in the construction industry. It also raises the excitement within the students to study and perform.”

**Tom Pitts
electrical technology instructor
J.D. Patton ATC**

Tom Pitts, center (standing), poses with several of his electrical technology students during the Construction Career Days event.



At left, Lori Alexander of Titan Reinforcing, LLC talks with C.E. McCormick Welding Instructor Charles “Augie” Germann and some of his students about the benefits of working in the field of iron.



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DeWalt Regional Account Manager Mike Griffith (left) and Bill Dickey of the Ackerman Chacco Co. (far right) show off some of the newest DeWalt equipment to one of the many students at the event.

“This type of event is important because all these students are future DeWalt users and buyers. These users have an opportunity to discover new products,” says Griffith. “When they learn with it, they buy it.”

